

USFA Releases Two Topical Reports on Fire Department Runs

The following article, which was forwarded to the WFCB by Region 6 Board member Mark Thompson (S. King Fire & Rescue), appeared on the WFCB website from December 11, 2007 – March 20, 2008.

Washington, D.C. - The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has issued two special reports, part of its Topical Fire Report Series, examining fire department responses to all types of emergency situations. In addition to fighting fires, fire departments respond to emergency medical service (EMS) calls; technical rescues; explosions; hazardous threats and conditions; natural disasters, and false alarms. Fire departments are also called upon to respond to a wide variety of non-emergency situations.

"Throughout the history of our nation, fire departments have, and continue to provide the necessary response and services to the communities they protect," said U.S. Fire Administrator Greg Cade. "In today's community and emergency environment, fire protection is only one of the many functions of a fire department. As in the past, today's firefighters are trained to handle all types of incidents, including EMS and will continue to prepare themselves for all types of emergencies, threats and vulnerabilities in the future."

The two reports, the Fire Department Overall Run Profile and the Fire Department Fire Run Profile were developed by the National Fire Data Center, part of USFA. To understand the full role fire departments play in a community, these reports explore fire department run activity as reflected in the 2004 National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) data.

The Fire Department Overall Run Profile looks at all types of fire department runs or calls including fire, whereas the focus of the Fire Department Fire Run Profile is strictly fire. Fifty-five percent of department responses require EMS and rescue services. False alarms account for 12 percent of all fire department runs, followed closely by good intent calls at 10 percent. About eight percent of all calls actually involve fire. Forty-two percent of all fire runs are to incidents involving structures, followed by outside fires at 35 percent.

The short topical reports are designed to explore facets of the U.S. fire problem as depicted through data collected in NFIRS. Each topical report briefly addresses the nature of the specific fire or fire-related topic, highlights important findings from the data, and may suggest other resources to consider for further information.

Copies of the reports can be downloaded at:
<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/statistics/reports/index.shtm>.